

CHAPTER 5

Need for Direct NPS Management

NPS management policies require that, prior to recommendation for creation of a NPS unit, that direct NPS management be demonstrated to be the “clearly superior” course of action. Several factors particular to the Homestead vicinity resources argue against the need for, or desirability of, direct NPS management. Inasmuch as the Bost Building, an NHL, has already been improved by collaborative effort between SIHC and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and will be managed by SIHC, NPS management is not essential to its preservation or interpretation. The integrity of the Battle of Homestead Landing site is diminished, making NPS acquisition or management of this site inappropriate. The Homestead Historic District includes hundreds of properties in private ownership that would not be practical or desirable for NPS ownership or management. Carrie Furnaces 6 and 7 are important industrial artifacts that require a very high level of investment and intervention for preservation, interpretation and ongoing operations that would not be supportable or affordable by the NPS alone. The scale of interpretation that was envisioned in proposals for the Rivers of Steel Management Action Plan suggested magnitudes of expenditure and interpretive techniques that would be beyond the capacity of the NPS to achieve.

Nonetheless, this Special Resource Study has concluded that some of the resources in the Homestead vicinity are individually important and that the resources as a group have considerable interpretive value and could be suitable for inclusion in the National Park System. NPS ownership and management of these individual or collective resources is not feasible nor is direct NPS management required. However, the value of the resources and the importance of the themes they convey raise the possibility that other management alternatives should be considered that do not rely on NPS ownership of land or buildings but have some other level of participation of the NPS.

One possibility that is considered among other alternatives reviewed in the following chapter is the designation of an “affiliated area” that would recognize the area’s importance to the nation without requiring or implying management by the NPS. To be considered as an affiliated area of the National Park System, the area’s resources must (1) meet the standards for national significance that apply to

units of the National Park System; (2) require some special recognition or technical assistance beyond what is available through existing NPS programs; (3) be managed in accordance with the policies and standards that apply to units of the National Park System; and (4) be assured of sustained resource protection, as documented in a formal agreement between the NPS and the non-federal management entity.

These criteria for designation of an affiliated area are briefly discussed below and amplified in the alternatives presented in Chapter 6:

- **Meet the standards for national significance that apply to units of the National Park System** – As noted in Chapter 2, the Bost Building, as an NHL, is an individual structure that meets the test of national significance, whereas the group of resources do not rise to the level of significance. The full ensemble of resources possesses exceptional interpretive value for the thematic topics of labor history and the powerful story of “Big Steel.”
- **Require some special recognition or technical assistance beyond what is available through existing NPS programs** – Labor history, particularly the sub-theme of “Labor Organizations and Protests” has very limited representation in the National Park System, nor, as noted in Chapter 3, are sites associated with the steel industry. Although the recognition provided by designation of the Rivers of Steel National Heritage Area is helpful, the special role of Homestead and “Big Steel” in the nation’s labor history require a focus and emphasis that is not practical to expect from a large heritage area that includes seven counties. Moreover, the preservation and interpretation of the Carrie Furnaces 6 and 7 will require significant resource commitments from local entities that may be difficult or impossible to achieve without explicit national recognition of this resource. NPS recognition and assistance may be pivotal to protect and interpret the resources considered in this study.
- **Document that a cooperative arrangement with the Park Service and contributions from other sources will be adequate to assure long-term protection of the resource** — NPS

already is cooperating with Rivers of Steel in providing technical assistance to the Rivers of Steel National Heritage Area, with special focus on trail opportunities through its Rivers, Trails and Conservation branch. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has provided considerable funding to rehabilitation of the Bost Building and has indicated that substantial support from the state to Carrie Furnaces may be available if this resource receives NPS recognition. Further, there is a considerable precedent in the Pittsburgh region for foundation and private support for historic and community resources, most recently manifest by a significant expansion of the Pittsburgh History Center on the Allegheny River, as well as by the expanded activities of the Pittsburgh History and

Landmarks Foundation to resources associated with the steel industry. It is likely that substantial capital funding can be raised through public and private sectors, if the Homestead and specific related resources are included in an affiliated area of the National Park System. Specific commitments may be impractical to secure until local entities have the opportunity to cooperatively plan with the assurance that national recognition is established.

- **Be assured of sustained resource protection.** This criterion is highly dependent on the recognition and cooperative management and funding approach that would be developed and is reviewed in the context of the alternatives in the following chapter.